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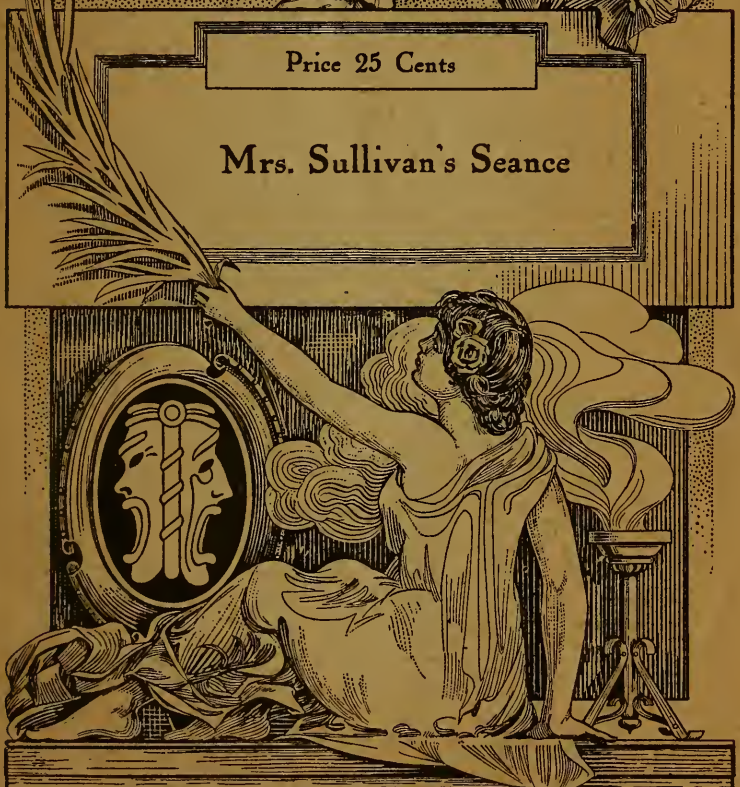
Mrs. Sullivan's Seance



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Winning Widow, 2 acts, 1½ hrs. (25c)	2	4
Zaragueta, 2 acts, 2 hrs...(35c)	7	4

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers, 623 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago

MRS. SULLIVAN'S SEANCE

A ONE-ACT COMEDY

BY

LAURA FRANCES KELLEY

AUTHOR OF

"Mrs. Sullivan's Social Tea," "Mrs. Sullivan in Politics," "The Enchanted Garden," etc.

CHICAGO

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

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MRS. SULLIVAN'S SEANCE

(A PLAY FOR SIX WOMEN)

CHARACTERS

MRS. MARY ANN SULLIVAN.....*The Hostess*
MAGGIE HOOLIGAN.....*Her Cousin*
MRS. BRIDGET SCANLAN.....
MRS. KATIE CLANCY.....
MRS. NELLIE MORIARITY.....
MRS. LIZZIE RILEY.....
.....*Her Neighbors*

SCENE—*Mrs. Sullivan's Parlor.*

PLACE—*A Large City.*

TIME—*The Present.*

TIME OF PLAYING—*About thirty minutes.*

COSTUMES.

MRS. SULLIVAN—House dress.

MAGGIE—Old hood, long skirt and shawl, all of which can be thrown off quickly, with neat street dress underneath.

GUESTS—Any suitable afternoon costumes.

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THE STORY OF THE PLAY.

A few ladies are gathered in the parlor of the Sullivan cottage to do their mending. The mending consists of Mr. Sullivan's red undershirt, Danny Scanlan's trousers, Mr. Moriarity's socks, Mrs. Clancy's stockings and Mrs. Riley's lace.

The conversation turns to fortune telling. Mrs. Sullivan suggests taking her cousin, Maggie Hooligan, to a seance. One of the guests, asking where Maggie has gone, learns she is in town shopping. The ladies are recounting their experiences with fortune tellers, and trying to decide whether or not they will go to one, when the door bell rings.

Mrs. Sullivan goes to the door. She tells the ladies a poor old woman is without, who wants to tell their fortunes. They ask her in. She plays upon their credulity, and embarrasses them by telling what each has said about the other. She finally tells them the spirit of Maggie Hooligan is present, and intimates that Maggie has been killed while crossing the street.

Mrs. Sullivan goes into hysterics. The ladies are sympathetic, Mrs. Scanlan being the only one who keeps cool. She suggests that, if Maggie is really there in spirit, the medium will dance while she sings "The Wearin' o' the Green."

Mrs. Scanlan hums the tune, pretending to play the violin. The medium starts to dance. Her disguise falls, revealing the real Maggie Hooligan.

The ladies demand their money back. Maggie laughingly refuses to refund the money, and is begging them not to be angry, as the curtain falls.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Up stage means away from footlights; *down stage,* near footlights. In the use of *right* and *left,* the actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

MRS. SULLIVAN'S SEANCE

SCENE: *The parlor of the Sullivan home. There is a door right, supposed to lead outside, and another door left, supposed to lead to the kitchen. Six chairs, including two rockers, are required. A table, with customary cover, books, etc., as well as mending baskets and sewing bags, is down stage, left of center. Glaring rugs are on the floor, cheap bric-a-brac is scattered here and there, and some cheap pictures adorn the walls.*

As the curtain rises, MRS. SULLIVAN *and her four neighbors,* MRS. SCANLAN, MRS. CLANCY, MRS. MORIARITY *and* MRS. RILEY, *are seated around the room, busy with their mending.*

MRS. SULLIVAN (*holding up a large red undershirt*). Girls, do you think it's worth mending?

MRS. SCANLAN (*glancing up from her work*). Anything that isn't all holes is worth mending; and anything that is all holes isn't anything.

MRS. MORIARITY (*waving a sock which she is knitting*). Lands, Bridget, talk rational. This isn't a conference of college professors.

MRS. RILEY (*holding up some lace which she is crocheting*). Well, I'm sure I know something, if we aren't college professors. I'd like to see any college professor that could make lace like this.

MRS. MORIARITY. You're right, Lizzie Riley. Not one would be guilty of it.

MRS. SCANLAN. Go 'long with yourselves, girls. This *is* a gathering of professors—professors of economics.

MRS. MORIARITY. Oh, Mrs. Sullivan, please get the dictionary. Sure, I'd like to know what she means.

MRS. CLANCY (*holding up two stockings, to which she is sewing new feet*). Ain't it the limit! These feet don't match. One's too long for one stocking, and too short for

the other. (*Haughtily.*) I need no dictionary. The doctor is my dictionary. He went to college.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Did Dr. Clancy learn all the words in the dictionary?

MRS. CLANCY. I should say he did, and some that aren't in it.

MRS. MORIARITY. True for you, Mrs. Dr. Clancy. The doctor was in the store yesterday. He and Moriarity were discussing politics, congress and the presidential policy. The doctor was that mad. Sure, some of the words he used couldn't be found in any dictionary.

MRS. CLANCY (*with pride*). He is smart and has excellent judgment. Why, he can tell what's going to happen from what's happening now.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Sure, Dr. Clancy must be as good as a fortune teller.

MRS. RILEY. Did any of yez ever go to a fortune teller?

MRS. SULLIVAN (*impressively*). There is something queer about fortune telling. I went to a medium once, and I'm sure she described Michael. It was too much for me.

MRS. MORIARITY. Well, if I had gone to one and she had described Moriarity, it would have been enough for me and too much for her, I'm telling yez.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Then why did you marry him, Mrs. Moriarity?

MRS. MORIARITY. I don't know to this day; honest, I don't. I guess it was because he belonged to the band and wore a uniform.

MRS. SCANLAN (*holding up a pair of small boy's trousers*). Lands, more patches. Danny wears out his clothes terrible.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Did you ever have your fortune told, Bridget?

MRS. SCANLAN. Sure, I think the most of it has been told already.

MRS. MORIARITY. She means by a honest-to-goodness fortune teller, Mrs. Scanlan.

MRS. SCANLAN. Indeed, I did that. I paid a dollar onct.

MRS. CLANCY. Did she tell you anything to make you think of it afterwards?

MRS. SCANLAN. Sure, I often thought I wished I had my dollar back.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*eagerly*). Bridget, dear, what did she say?

MRS. SCANLAN. She told me I was to marry a tall, willowy blond, with lots of bushy hair (*gestures*) standing up round his head. And yez all know, girls, Scanlan is short and fat, with a head like a peeled potato.

MRS. RILEY. Oh, I believe in them. One told me I was to marry a handsome man.

MRS. MORIARITY (*getting up and facing* MRS. RILEY). My lands! Do you think you did? (*Takes seat.*)

MRS. RILEY. Riley is the handsomest man on the avena, if it isn't saying much for his beauty, I'd like yez to know, Mrs. Moriarity!

MRS. MORIARITY. I'd like you to know, Mrs. Riley, that Moriarity is the prettiest man in America, in looks as well as character.

MRS. CLANCY. Barrin' the doctor, maybe.

MRS. SULLIVAN. And Michael.

MRS. SCANLAN. Go 'long with yourselves, girls. Sure, we all have handsome husbands. The movies are crazy to get them. They have a smile like a hero when they come home tired and supper isn't on the table.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*clasping her hands*). Girls! I have an idee.

MRS. MORIARITY. Hivens, Mrs. Sullivan, what is it?

MRS. SULLIVAN. Wouldn't it be romantic to entertain Maggie Hooligan by taking her to a seance?

MRS. RILEY (*sighing*). My, I love romance. I read a great deal of it.

MRS. MORIARITY. I guess that is the only way any one of us will ever get much romance, is to read of it.

MRS. CLANCY (*holding up one arm with a stocking on it*). I guess none of you ladies read any more than I do.

MRS. SULLIVAN. What are your favorite books, Mrs. Dr. Clancy?

MRS. CLANCY. My, I'm that forgetful, I can't remember the names; they're so hard to pronounce. Besides, I rarely speak French to people who don't understand it.

MRS. SULLIVAN. I am so fond of the Dukess. (*Rises, clasping her hands.*) I love to read romance and imagine I—I am the heroine! (*Sits down, picks up shirt from the floor and shakes it out.*)

MRS. CLANCY. Great hivens!

MRS. MORIARITY. You look like a heroine, Mary Ann. And who could imagine a hero wearing a red shirt?

MRS. SCANLAN (*rocking*). Ladies, do yez care to hear about my romance?

MRS. MORIARITY. Sure, Mrs. Scanlan. But I can't promise to pay much attention when I'm turning a heel.

MRS. SULLIVAN. I'd love to hear it, Bridget.

MRS. SCANLAN. Well, I first met Scanlan at Dooligan's ball.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Was it love at first sight, Bridget? It was with me and Michael.

MRS. MORIARITY. Sure, I loved Moriarity at first sight. But if I'd only got me second sight.

MRS. SCANLAN. Well, as I was saying, I met him at Dooligan's ball.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Just a minute, Bridget. I heard a noise in the kitchen. Maybe it is Maggie. (*Exits, left.*)

MRS. MORIARITY. Where is Maggie?

MRS. CLANCY. She went to town with Kitty O'Dowd to buy a bandeau.

MRS. MORIARITY. For the love of goodness, what is a bandeau?

MRS. CLANCY. Bandeau is a French word, meaning wedding clothes. Didn't you know that?

MRS. MORIARITY. Sure, I knew it all along. I only wanted to see if you speak the same kind of French that I do.

MRS. SULLIVAN *enters from the left.*

MRS. SULLIVAN. There was no one in the kitchen. (*Sits.*)

MRS. RILEY. Is Kitty O'Dowd engaged, Mrs. Sullivan?

MRS. SULLIVAN. No, but she belongs to the league of preparedness.

MRS. RILEY. My lands, I didn't know she was a politician.

MRS. SULLIVAN. She isn't. She intends to be prepared when Tom Roony proposes. He has pretty near, but not quite.

MRS. RILEY. Then he probably won't. The things we are prepared for never happen. It's always the things we don't expect.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Well, she expects him to propose. He has pretty near, but not quite. He said to her one day, "How would you like to live in the country?" She should have said, "I'd live anywhere with you, Tommy." But she didn't, and he hasn't said any more since.

MRS. RILEY. Oh, well, Tom Roony always was careful. If he said it again, she might take him up on it.

MRS. MORIARITY. Does he wear eye blinders?

MRS. SULLIVAN. Don't talk that way, Nellie. Kitty looks all right when she gets on her war paint.

MRS. MORIARITY. True for you, Mrs. Sullivan. But sure, there are others.

MRS. SCANLAN. Well, it's nice of Maggie to take an interest in Kitty's bandeau.

MRS. MORIARITY. Maggie will get her reward. For sure, this is her Tommy day. Tommy did this, and Tommy said that. Sure I don't envy Maggie.

(*A noise like a suppressed laugh is heard off left.*)

MRS. SULLIVAN. Did yez all hear that noise in the kitchen? I'm going to look again. (*Exits, left.*)

MRS. RILEY. We haven't heard about your romance, Mrs. Scanlan.

MRS. SULLIVAN *enters from the left.*

MRS. SULLIVAN. There isn't anyone there. I've looked all around. (*Sits.*)

MRS. MORIARITY. It's the wind blowing the cabbage leaves in the back yard, Mrs. Sullivan.

MRS. SCANLAN. Maybe it's a ghost, Mary Ann. Granny Brogan used to tell us ghost stories when we was going to bed.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Mercy, Bridget! Don't suggest such a thing. Please let us hear your romance.

MRS. SCANLAN. Well, I first met Scanlan at Dooligan's ball, as I have said once.

MRS. MORIARITY. As you have said often.

MRS. SCANLAN. I went to the ball with a long-haired genius who played the fiddle. I didn't like him, but pa did. Sure, I couldn't be sitting still all evening. And Scanlan, though fat, was an illegant dancer. He was a plain hod-carrier in those days and, having to step lively, was very graceful. So we danced the program together.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*eagerly*). Did he see you home, Bridget?

MRS. SCANLAN (*nodding*). He did that. And now he says, "Bridget, go all you wish, but be sure and see yourself home before meal time."

MRS. RILEY. What became of the fiddler?

MRS. SCANLAN. I don't know. I saw him onct after that, and he wouldn't speak to me.

MRS. MORIARITY. Small blame to him.

MRS. RILEY. Did you have a hard time getting Mr. Scanlan?

MRS. SCANLAN. I did that, but he had a harder time getting me.

MRS. CLANCY. Now I'm interested. I wish the doctor was here to enjoy it. Do tell us all about it, Mrs. Scanlan.

MRS. SCANLAN (*confidentially*). Girls, he was jealous.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Why, I can't imagine Mr. Scanlan being jealous.

MRS. SCANLAN (*proudly*). Sure, I was good-looking in those days.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Bridget, dear, no offense. You are even better-looking now. I mean Mr. Scanlan is so good-natured.

MRS. SCANLAN. I understand what you mean, Mary Ann. But for the love of goodness don't let Scanlan hear you say it. Sure, he'd knock a man down for saying less than that about him. He says when people can't say anything interesting about a man they always say, "Ah, the poor lad was good-natured."

MRS. MORIARITY. Was he jealous of your beauty, Mrs. Scanlan?

MRS. SCANLAN. Glory, no! You see, it was this way. I was wild over him, and young and silly enough to show it. Did yez ever think, girls, it isn't wise to let a man know how well yez like him?

MRS. MORIARITY. Do we think it? Say, we *know* it.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Sure we do. Why, even Michael doesn't know how nice he is.

MRS. SCANLAN. Well, Scanlan did. He got mighty big feeling. But by mentioning Micky Shea, Patsie Finnegan and Dennie Carney, I had him wild. He was for fighting a duel like a count. He says to me, "Bridget, I'll either fight the duel or jump in the lake." I says to him, "Scanlan, buy a marriage license instead; it will be cheaper."

MRS. CLANCY. Wasn't it beautifully romantic? I wish the doctor was here to enjoy it.

MRS. RILEY (*sadly.*) I met Riley at a funeral. His first wife's.

MRS. MORIARITY. Did he propose then?

MRS. RILEY. Oh, no, not right away. He waited more than a week. He said I was so sympathetic that I really felt worse than he did.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Well, no one need come to my funeral and sympathize with Michael that way. I certainly would object.

MRS. CLANCY. Don't give them the chance, Mrs. Sullivan. Keep well. The doctor is just around the corner.

MRS. MORIARITY. Speaking of wakes, girls, are we going to a seance?

(*Loud knocking is heard at left. All are startled.*)

MRS. SULLIVAN. My, isn't that terrible! (*Rises and exits, left.*)

MRS. RILEY. My, it certainly is spooky. I'm getting the shivers.

MRS. SULLIVAN *enters from left.*

MRS. SULLIVAN. No one is there. I have looked in all the corners and out of doors. (*Sits.*)

MRS. MORIARITY. Oh, take it easy, Mrs. Sullivan. If it's a ghost, let it walk. I know a man who knew a man who saw a ghost walking up the window curtains, onct.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Mrs. Moriarity, you make me nervous. I feel that creepy I can hardly sew.

MRS. RILEY (*holding up her lace*). I've made a mistake. The pattern is all wrong. This isn't a rose; it's a cabbage.

MRS. CLANCY (*holding up a pair of stockings*). Not one of these feet match; I'll never be able to wear them.

MRS. MORIARITY (*waving a sock*). Blessed day! This sock is a porous plaster. I've dropped twelve stitches.

MRS. SCANLAN (*holding trousers up*). Glory! I've put a green patch on one leg and a yellow one on the other. Danny will be the laughing stock of the school if he wears them.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*holding up red undershirt*). Horrors! I've sewed Michael's shirt together. I hope I won't be in hearing distance when he tries to get into it.

(*The ladies fold up their sewing and put it on the table.*)

(*A knock is heard off right.*)

MRS. MORIARITY. Oh, Mrs. Sullivan, someone is knocking at your front door.

(MRS. SULLIVAN *rises and exits at right.*)

MRS. RILEY. I can't see we've accomplished much.

MRS. MORIARITY. Sure, we haven't. But don't moan

about it, Mrs. Riley. Save your sighs for something worth while.

MRS. SULLIVAN *enters, right.*

MRS. SULLIVAN. Girls, the strangest thing has happened. A poor old woman is outside. She says she is a medium, and wants to tell our fortunes.

MRS. SCANLAN. Let her in, Mary Ann; let her in. I want to hear about the tall willowy blond.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*opening the door*). Please come in, lady.

MAGGIE, *disguised as "the medium," enters at the right.*

MRS. SULLIVAN (*placing a chair in center of stage*). Sit down, please, lady. Can you go into a trance?

MAGGIE (*sitting in chair*). Sure, I can go into anything.

MRS. MORIARITY. What do you charge?

MAGGIE (*looking about the room*). Fifty cents each.

MRS. MORIARITY. That's too much.

MAGGIE (*rising*). As you please. That's my price.

MRS. SCANLAN. Well, I lost a dollar onct, so I might as well lose fifty cents more.

MRS. CLANCY. Sure, I can afford it. Some child will swallow his pa's collar button, and the doctor will get more than one fifty cents back!

MAGGIE (*sitting down*). I must first have my money. (*The ladies open their pocketbooks, get up and place money in her lap. She puts money in her purse. Ladies resume their seats.*) Now, ladies, please draw your chairs together and form a circle.

(*The ladies draw chairs on either side of* MAGGIE, *forming a semi-circle which faces the audience.*)

MRS. SCANLAN. Lady, if you can tell me how old I am, I'll surely believe you. When I asked pa he'd always say, "Well, Bridget, I don't know exactly. You were born in Ireland when the sun was shining, and sure it's been shining ever since."

MAGGIE (*passing hand over her eyes*). Yes, yes; you were born in Ireland.

MRS. SCANLAN. Sure, I just told you I was.

MAGGIE (*dreamily*). Yes, yes; fifty-five years ago March the tenth.

MRS. SCANLAN. You're wrong! Never in my life will I own up to more than forty years.

MAGGIE. Dearie, you don't understand. I mean if you live long enough.

MRS. SCANLAN. If I live to be more than a hundred years old, I'll never own up to more than that.

MAGGIE. Yes, I see, dearie. It runs in the family. Dear old Granny Brogan is here. She was seventy when she passed out thirty years ago. But says she, "Tell my little Biddie I am only forty now."

MRS. SCANLAN (*touching her hand to her eyes*). Poor old Granny. I was her little Biddie.

MRS. MORIARITY. Don't cry about it, Mrs. Scanlan. Sure, no one could call you "little Biddie" now!

MAGGIE. She says to beware of a blonde woman with a quarrelsome disposition, who has been doing a great deal of talking about you.

MRS. MORIARITY. Granny Brogan would never talk about me that way. I don't believe it.

MAGGIE. It is Granny Brogan talking. A nice old lady with a brogue as rich as cream.

MRS. SCANLAN. You see it *is* Granny, Mrs. Moriarity. Sure, you must have said something about me, else how would you know it was you she meant?

MRS. MORIARITY. Well, I won't let anyone run down me char*ac*ter, dead or alive.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Girls, girls, don't quarrel. Remember, we all want our fifty cents' worth.

MRS. MORIARITY. We are sure getting it.

MAGGIE. A dignified gentleman with a white wig is here to call on you. He says his name is General Washington.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*clasping her hands*). Oh, General!

General Washington! I am that proud to have you enter my humble home. Sure, I always wanted to meet you.

MRS. SCANLAN (*reprovingly*). Keep quiet, Mary Ann. The general is calling on me, not you.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Well, he was calling at my home, and I was merely being polite.

MRS. CLANCY. My, I do love the nobility!

MAGGIE. Yes, dear friends, the nobility is in line. Queen Elizabeth is here, arm in arm with Mary, Queen of Scots. They are with Granny Brogan. And they all love Bridget.

MRS. RILEY. I wish I'd worn me green silk. That's always the way. If you aren't dressed up, some one you want to make an impression on is sure to come.

MRS. SCANLAN. Don't try to impress them, Lizzie Riley. I believe what the medium says. Because Granny Brogan always did keep good company.

MRS. MORIARITY (*scornfully*). The idee! Granny Brogan in company with Queen Lizzie and Mary Scott! And Mr. Washington! I've a little common sense!

MAGGIE. Lizzie, Lizzie Riley. Your husband's first wife is calling you.

MRS. RILEY (*startled*). Blessed Agnes! Well, I won't come.

MAGGIE. She says her name is Ellen.

MRS. RILEY. Well, that's true.

MAGGIE. And she says, "Tell Riley I love him still."

MRS. RILEY (*emphatically*). I will not! Riley is conceited enough, without thinking an angel loves him.

MAGGIE. She says she wasn't considered an angel on earth, but an awful nagger. And that Riley will be glad to know she is in pleasant company.

MRS. RILEY. Well, I'm sure Riley is pleasant enough company for me. But I'm glad she feels that way about it.

MAGGIE. Have you a question to ask?

MRS. RILEY. Does Riley love me as much as his first?

MAGGIE. Sure, but not half so much as he will his third.

MRS. RILEY. There never will be a third if I can help it!

MRS. CLANCY. You *can* help it, Mrs. Riley. The doctor is just around the corner.

MRS. MORIARITY. How often do you have to remind us of it?

MRS. CLANCY. Well, it is my duty to boost the doctor. That is, if I want any new clothes to wear.

MAGGIE. Katie—Katy-did?

MRS. CLANCY (*eagerly*). Oh, I am sure that's Uncle Mike. He always called me his little Katy-did.

MAGGIE. Yes, a very refined gentleman is talking now. He says (*stutters*), "Katie, di-di-did you know what people are saying?"

MRS. CLANCY. My, that is surely Uncle Mike! I was telling Maggie Hooligan only this morning how poor Uncle Mike used to stutter.

MAGGIE (*shaking her head sadly*). "Katie, di-di-did you realize no one wants you? They all want your husband."

MRS. CLANCY (*showing astonishment*). Well, they can't have him.

MAGGIE. When Mary Ann is sick, she says, "Send for Dr. Clancy. Just to look at him makes me well."

MRS. SULLIVAN (*rising*). Why—why—Mrs. Clancy, this is an outrage! I meant he is so inspiring.

MRS. CLANCY (*looking haughtily at* MRS. SULLIVAN). I guess you said it, all right. (*To* MAGGIE.) But tell me, lady, what did she say about me?

MAGGIE. Oh, Katie, you have so many rivals. Who is Bridget? Bridget says, "Dr. Clancy is a lovely man, but honest, I should think Katie would be jealous of his patients. They are so good-looking."

MRS. SCANLAN (*rising*). Oh, Mrs. Clancy, please take no offense. I didn't mean it. Honest to goodness I didn't. (*Sits down.*)

MRS. CLANCY. You needn't tell me what you meant, Mrs. Scanlan. What you said is enough—quite enough.

MAGGIE. Where is Nellie? I get the initials, "N. M."; "Nellie M." She says, "Honest, if I wanted to take a short cut to the cemetery, I'd send for Dr. Clancy."

MRS. MORIARITY (*rising*). I said it, Mrs. Clancy. Sure I said it. But I meant a walk, Mrs. Clancy. Your husband is such good company.

MRS. CLANCY (*rising and placing her hands on her hips*). If you want to take a walk to the cemetery, Mrs. Moriarity, take your own husband with you and leave him there. Sure, you'd be glad to, every one knows! (*They sit down, glaring at each other.*)

MAGGIE. Lizzie says—

MRS. RILEY (*interrupting*). I'm sure I don't know what she can say about me.

MRS. CLANCY (*folding her arms*). Well, what does Lizzie say? I can stand most anything now.

MAGGIE. Lizzie says, "If Dr. Clancy was a widower, and I a widow, I'd go to dear Katie's funeral and congratulate him on his becoming mourning."

MRS. MORIARITY. You will never have the chance, Mrs. Riley. A doctor and a mourner would starve.

MAGGIE. Do you want to ask a question?

MRS. CLANCY. No thanks. I've heard enough.

MAGGIE. Where is darling Nellie?

MRS. MORIARITY. That must be myself. Sure, I always longed to be somebody's darling.

MAGGIE. Your dear cousin Lottie comes to me and calls you "darling Nellie."

MRS. MORIARITY. Sure, she used to call me more than that when she was here.

MAGGIE. She loves you now, and wants me to say to you, "Nellie, beware!"

MRS. MORIARITY (*alarmed*). Beware of what, for mercy sake?

MAGGIE. A blonde woman.

MRS. MORIARITY (*eagerly*). Who is she?

MAGGIE. She loves your husband. She saw him and talked with him today.

MRS. MORIARITY. The deceitful creature!

MAGGIE. Yes, and your husband kissed her good-bye.

MRS. MORIARITY. Oh the deceiving men! The deceiving men! Do I know this woman?

MAGGIE. You think you know her, but you've taken so much time getting acquainted with other people that you've neglected her.

MRS. MORIARITY. Well, I'll get acquainted with her now, all right! Where can I meet her?

MAGGIE. Go home, Nellie M., and look in the mirror over the kitchen table. You will see a handsome woman; the blonde.

MRS. MORIARITY (*falls back in chair, fanning herself*). What a relief! Well, cousin Lottie always would have her joke. The pity of it is I can't get even with her now.

MAGGIE. Oh, Mary; Mary Ann.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*placing her hand on her heart*). My, I wonder what has happened to Michael! The children! Oh, I'm that faint!

MRS. SCANLAN. Brace up, Mary Ann. Don't faint until after it's all over.

MAGGIE. It's Maggie, your dear cousin.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Oh, mercy, what's Maggie been doing now?

MAGGIE. Your dear cousin—who I see you are so fond of, Mary Ann—has had an accident.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Glory! What was it?

MAGGIE. You remember Michael's false teeth?

MRS. SULLIVAN. Mercy, yes! Has anything happened to them?

MAGGIE. Maggie was to take them to the dentist's on her way to town, was she not?

MRS. SULLIVAN (*leaning forward*). Sure she was. Both plates. Michael had to go to work toothless.

MAGGIE (*darkly*). He will have to go that way many a day.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Glory! What is it you're telling me? I had her carry the plates separate like.

MAGGIE. Oh, Mary Ann! Sad, sad news! Maggie dropped the upper plate on the sidewalk. It broke into five

pieces. She stooped to pick it up, and dropped the lower plate.

MRS. SULLIVAN. My hivens!

MAGGIE. It broke into splinters.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Oh, Glory! What will Michael do?

MAGGIE. Your dear husband will have to buy a new set of teeth. The dentist says he never will be able to fix them.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Michael will be crazy. He has put all his money in polytics.

MRS. MORIARITY. Cheer up, Mrs. Sullivan. Maybe the dentist needs a new pair of shoes.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Yes, but Michael may get a different face with his new teeth. You never can depend on false teeth.

MAGGIE (*sadly*). That is not all!

MRS. SULLIVAN. No, I suppose the rest is worser.

MAGGIE. It will be hard on you, Mrs. Sullivan. Your late cousin was crossing the street.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Horrors! Has anything happened to Maggie?

MAGGIE (*impressively*). The crowded streets, with speeding automobiles.

MRS. SULLIVAN. Mercy! Was Maggie hurt?

MAGGIE. It was a horrible accident!

MRS. RILEY. Ain't it awful? I knew something would happen.

MAGGIE. Maggie tells me—Maggie is here now. She says, "Tell my dear cousin—Mary Ann Hooligan Sullivan that is—that I dropped her big bottle of hair dye in the street." (*The ladies exchange glances.*)

MRS. SULLIVAN (*reviving*). Tonic, you mean.

MAGGIE. Sure, call it tonic, if it makes you feel better.

MRS. SCANLAN. Never mind what she calls it, lady. What happened?

MAGGIE (*dramatically*). Automobiles were coming. Crowds were hurrying. The hair dye dropped. Bing, bang! Two tires were cut. Traffic was stopped. Policemen gath-

ered. When they looked for your dear cousin—she had passed on! Her spirit is speaking to you now.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*getting up and pacing the floor*). Oh, never mind the hair dye; never mind the teeth. (*Wrings hands.*) Oh, give me back my Maggie! Give me back my dear, sweet cousin! (*Takes hair pins out and pretends to tear her hair.*) Oh, get Michael! Oh, her poor mother! Her poor sister! Oh, she will have the biggest wake in town! Oh—

MRS. CLANCY (*going to* MRS. SULLIVAN *and putting her arm around her*). Don't take on so, darling. I'll get the doctor, and call up the morgue.

MRS. RILEY (*wringing her hands*). I'll buy your mourning, Mrs. Sullivan. I will enjoy doing it.

MRS. MORIARITY (*patting* MRS. SULLIVAN *on the back*). Don't take it so hard, Mary Ann. I'll make Moriarity lend Mr. Sullivan his company teeth for the funeral.

MRS. SULLIVAN (*wailing*). Oh, oh, Maggie!

MRS. SCANLAN (*pushing the ladies aside*). Keep cool, ladies. Mary Ann, don't start waking Maggie until you find out the truth. Make the medium prove Maggie is here. I will hum "The Wearin' o' the Green," and if the real Maggie is here sure she'll start to dance.

(MRS. SCANLAN *pretends to play the violin in pantomime, humming the tune.* MAGGIE *rises and starts to dance. Her hood falls back and her long skirt and shawl drop to the floor, revealing* MAGGIE *in street clothes.*)

ALL (*in amazement*). Maggie!

MAGGIE (*laughing*). Wasn't it rich? I'm going to a show.

MRS. MORIARITY. Maggie Hooligan, you cheat! We want our money back.

MAGGIE. Not one cent will yez get! I worked hard for that money. (*Good naturedly.*) Honest, now, don't have any hard feelin's about what yez heard. You knew, it ain't what people say about yez. It's the way they say it.

QUICK CURTAIN.

An Early Bird

By WALTER BEN HARE

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Comedy in 3 acts; 7 males, 7 females. Time, 2¼ hours. Scenes: Private office of a railroad president; room in a cheap boarding house at Flagg Corners. Act I.—A bird in the tree. Act II.—A bird in the bush. Act III.—A bird in the hand. "You see that door? On the outside it says Pull, but on my side it says Push! Get the idea? I had no pull to make my way, only push! And it has made me a millionaire. Understand? Push!" Thus Kilbuck tells his son, Tony, who has been expelled from college. With unlimited nerve and a light heart, Tony starts out to carve his way to fame and fortune and to win the girl he loves. On the rough journey he meets one Barnaby Bird, who figures strongly in the play, but he outwits him, puts a big deal over on his father, wins the girl he loves and all's well. Comedy features are introduced by a coquettish stenographer, a fresh office boy, a country belle and her mother, a landlady of a Flagg Corners hotel, and last but by no means least, Dilly the hired girl.

"The play, 'An Early Bird,' given by the Georgetown O. B. C., is the best given here yet."—*Ormstown (Que.) Bulletin.*

SYNOPSIS

Act I.—The private office of Cyrus B. Kilbuck on a morning in March. Cupid gets busy in a railroad office. Jessamine visits the president of the road. "I've got it all planned out; by the time my boy is 40, he'll be the president of the road!" Barnaby Bird, from Flagg Corners, a wise old Bird. The insulted office boy. Bad news from college. "Turn on the lights, hang out the American flag, kill the fatted calf and let the band play—the prodigal has returned!" "I was in the freshman class four years and I was just beginning to enjoy the place." Father and son. A stormy interview. "Get out, earn your own living—and make good!" Exit Tony.

Act II.—The sitting room in Mrs. Beavers' boardinghouse, Flagg Corners. A morning in July. A lazy boarder. "I'll get him up if I have to throw a bucket of hot suds through the transom." Rosa Bella Beavers, the belle of Flagg Corners. "I've been working this life-insurance gag for three months now and I've earned just $7.50." Mr. and Mrs. Perry Allen arrive to meet Jessamine. Tony blossoms out as a regular business man. Mr. Bird gets inside information concerning the P. D. Q. extension. Tony buys the River Road. "Ruined, ruined! Just when I thought I'd coaxed the bird into my hand, I find he's farther away than ever. Tough luck, old kid; tough luck!"

Act III.—After dinner. "The extension is to be built over the North Road. I'm a failure!" Jessamine shows her faith in Tony. "I'm going to be a man!" Mr. Bird takes a drop too much and is rebuked by Dilly, the hired girl and the corresponding secretary of the Young Ladies' Cold Water Society. Jessamine traps the bird and Tony buys the North Road. Sold for half a million dollars. "He's a regular business man at last!"

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